



Administrator Performance Assessment (APA) and COVID-19 Guidelines & Frequently Asked Questions April 10, 2020

The Commission on Teacher Credentialing (Commission) is closely monitoring the spread of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and the impact of school and university closures on candidates enrolled in administrator preparation programs. We are particularly concerned about candidates' ability to complete clinical practice/fieldwork and performance assessment requirements during the 2019-20 academic year.

Passage of the Commission-approved administrator performance assessment during initial administrator preparation is a requirement for licensure in California. As such, the Commission is not able to waive this requirement for administrative services credentialing candidates impacted by COVID-19 related school closures. Moreover, as a professional standards board and licensing agency, the Commission is responsible for ensuring candidates have demonstrated competence prior to earning a license. Consistent with practice in other professions, maintaining the standards for the profession remains a high priority for the Commission.

In response to the current public health crisis related to COVID-19, it is the Commission's intent to work with administrator preparation programs to do whatever is legally, practically, and programmatically feasible to help candidates who are on target to complete preparation and earn a credential this year to do so. For many candidates and programs this will involve greater use of online technology for the collection of evidence in each of the cycles. The Commission and Evaluation Systems will work with assessors to strengthen their preparation to evaluate APA responses that include evidence collected through online settings. At this point, there is no restriction regarding the use of online settings in any cycle of the APA.

For candidates who are unable to meet all requirements during this academic year due to COVID-19, the Commission's Variable Term Waiver (VTW) could allow them to begin work as an administrator this fall and complete clinical practice/fieldwork and/or their

administrator performance assessment during their first year of employment as an administrator.

The Commission is working with the administration, legislature, stakeholders, districts, and programs to understand and minimize, to the extent possible, the impacts for candidates, districts and administrator preparation programs.

This document provides guidance to sponsors of administrator preparation programs regarding the California Administrator Performance Assessment (CalAPA) requirement.

For up-to-date information, please consult the Commission's dedicated [COVID-19 webpage](#) and the [Clinical Practice](#) guidance document. The Commission also provides updates to the field via the weekly [PSD News](#) emails. For information on testing center closures and other test status questions, please consult the [California Educator Credentialing Assessment Website](#).

Guidelines for the 2019-20 Cohort of Administrator Candidates to Complete Preliminary Administrator Certification

As of now, most of the schools in the state have closed through at least mid-April, though there are some indications that schools may not re-open until fall 2020. If schools do not reopen this spring or summer, it may be difficult for some candidates to complete their CalAPA during this academic year.

While the Commission recognizes that each candidate situation is unique, broadly speaking, there seems to be two common scenarios facing this cohort of preliminary administrative services credentialing candidates:

Scenario 1: Candidates are able to finish coursework, clinical practice/fieldwork, and CalAPA by the end of the spring or summer 2020 term.

Given the current circumstance of school closures, this may be possible with modifications. Course-embedded demonstrations of the California Administrator Performance Expectations (CAPE) are under the purview of preparation programs, and Administrator Preparation Programs will have flexibility to modify and adapt as they see fit. The guiding principle for making modifications should be whether candidates can demonstrate to their preparation programs that they have developed key CAPE skills and knowledge to draw on when they begin an administrator position.

Programs will be asked to provide a summary (no more than five (5) pages) of how they have modified coursework and program-level assessments due to COVID-19. There is no need for programs to update their Course Matrix to identify how these modifications were made during this time period.

With regard to the CalAPA in this scenario, if candidates are able to assemble sufficient evidence to develop their CalAPA, **as jointly determined by the program and the candidate**, then the Administrator Preparation Programs should support and facilitate their completion of this program requirement during the spring or summer term. More guidance on the completion of the CalAPA is provided below. With regard to the clinical practice/fieldwork in this scenario, see [previously published guidelines](#).

Scenario 2: Candidates are able to finish coursework, but UNABLE to complete clinical practice/fieldwork and/or the CalAPA by the end of the spring or summer 2020 term.

The Commission understands that this could be the case for many candidates this year. Programs with candidates in this situation can modify coursework as outlined in Scenario 1. In addition, the program may submit a written request to the Commission that their candidate(s) be eligible for a Variable Term Waiver based on the emergency health and safety restrictions arising from COVID-19. The process for requesting a VTW will be available soon on the Commission's [COVID-19 webpage](#).

Commission staff are currently in consultation with districts, stakeholders, and Administrator Preparation Programs to determine optimal processes for supporting candidates as they complete the VTW requirements. We will send additional guidance when it is available.

FAQs Regarding the Administrator Performance Assessment Requirement

- 1Q. Will candidates still be required to complete the CalAPA?
- 1A. **Yes. Completion of the CalAPA is required by regulation for all preliminary administrator candidates before they can be recommended for a preliminary credential. Candidates who cannot complete the CalAPA during this academic year due to lack of access to an appropriate clinical/fieldwork experience may be granted a Variable Term Waiver by the Commission upon request of their preparation program as described below.**
- 2Q. What is a program's responsibility to candidates who are completing their CalAPA while employed on a Variable Term Waiver?
- 2A. **Candidates must be affiliated with a Commission-approved program to be eligible to complete an approved CalAPA. If a candidate is issued a VTW by the Commission they will be able to secure employment as a school administrator and will have one year to complete their CalAPA. Programs are expected to support the candidate during this time as required in Preliminary Administrator Program Standard 7. Program level support may be provided through distance learning as candidates may not be employed**

near the preliminary administrator preparation program. There may be an appropriate role for on-site support to the candidate provided by the mentor/coach they are assigned to during induction. More detail about supporting a candidate on a VTW while they complete the CalAPA will be forthcoming.

- 3Q. Due to school closures, can candidates change venues, or complete their CalAPA requirements in an online setting?
- 3A. **Yes. Determinations regarding the appropriate site for a candidate's clinical practice/fieldwork must be made by their program. Programs and candidates should take into consideration, the range of TK-12 online instructional settings being created, as well as student, teacher and administrator accessibility, and cycle requirements. A candidate must continue to receive appropriate support from their program for their clinical practice.**
- 4Q. What are the Commission's expectations for candidates completing CalAPA requirements in an online setting?
- 4A. **All CalAPA submissions must meet the requirements specified in the CalAPA assessment guides. There is no restriction regarding the use of online settings in any cycle of the APA. Programs must work with candidates to determine whether an online setting is suitable for completing their assessment. A key issue will be whether the candidate can obtain sufficient video evidence to support development of their CalAPA in an online setting. A second key issue will be that the candidate can be adequately supported and supervised by the program as they develop their CalAPA.**
- 5Q. Due to disruptions, will additional dates for submission of materials be added?
- 5A. **Commission staff are working closely with Evaluation Systems group of Pearson to add additional submission deadlines for CalAPA candidates. If necessary, additional dates may be added later this year. All dates for the CalAPA will be posted on the [California Educator Credentialing Assessment website](#) as they are identified.**
- 6Q. Will there be significant delays in scoring CalAPA assessments?
- 6A. **At this time, candidates can expect a three-week processing time for score reports for CalAPA. All published spring submission dates are available to candidates. All current and additional dates for the CalAPA will be available on the [California Educator Credentialing Assessment website](#) as they are identified.**

- 7Q. How long do consequential candidates have to complete their CalAPA submissions?
- 7A. Consequential candidates for CalAPA currently have one year from the date of registration to submit their completed responses for the CalAPA. In support of those candidates who may need more time to submit due COVID-19, on April 6, 2020 Evaluation Systems group of Pearson will set all open CalAPA registrations (e.g., a consequential candidate who is currently registered but not yet completed) to expire on December 5, 2021. Information as it becomes available will be posted for the CalAPA on the [California Educator Credentialing Assessment website](#).**
- 8Q. Can CalAPA candidates withdraw if they believe they will be unable to complete their response before the deadline?
- 8A. Yes. Candidates who have registered for CalAPA but have not yet submitted may withdraw their registration and receive a partial refund if the request is submitted within one year of the candidate's registration date. Information on withdrawal and re-registration can be found for the CalAPA on the [California Educator Credentialing Assessment website](#).**
- 9Q. Will submission dates change for non-consequential CalAPA candidates?
- 9A. The CalAPA non-consequential policy requiring all cycles to be completed by December 31, 2020 will stay in place and programs are expected to continue support to these candidates as appropriate given spring school closures. All non-consequential candidate registrations are active through December 31, 2020. However, if a candidate needs extra time to complete their non-consequential CalAPA due to COVID-19, programs can contact the CTC to request an extension of policy for a candidate.**
- 10Q. (NEW) Why would a CalAPA candidate need a Variable Term Waiver (VTW)?
- 10A. The VTW will allow the candidate to be eligible for administrative employment while completing Preliminary Administrative Services Credential (PASC) requirements. The candidate will participate in an induction program, with the focus of their first individual induction plan (IIP) being their unfinished CalAPA cycles.**
- 11Q. (NEW) What about CalAPA candidates who are not employed?
- 11A. For candidates who are not employed in the summer or fall of 2020, they may continue their preliminary preparation program once schools are open and available, completing program requirements (coursework, fieldwork, performance assessment) and earning a certificate of eligibility.**
- 12Q. (NEW) Are programs allowed to adjust the requirements of the CalAPA to meet candidates' current situations?

- 12A. Programs are able to adjust program processes as long as the requirements of the program, as specified in the Program Standards, are met. Video recordings of online meetings are acceptable for cycles 2 and 3 evidence as long as permissions are aligned with school and district policies.**
- 13Q. (NEW) What guidance may I provide my candidates who are attempting to complete CalAPA cycle 2?
- 13A. Candidates completing cycle 2 may be able to complete their current submission if the Community of Practice is able to meet via electronic platforms and the selected strategy can be implemented and monitored during its early implementation. Others may find it easier to start the cycle over, with a different problem of practice that is doable given an online setting. Some may find that completion of the cycle is impossible due to school closures; for these candidates, the VTW is the best option.**
- 14Q. (NEW) What guidance may I provide my candidates who are attempting to complete CalAPA cycle 3?
- 14A. Candidates completing cycle 3 may work with their volunteer teacher, who has permission to teach in an online setting, to observe an authentic lesson and discuss professional practice. Should online teaching not be allowed at the volunteer teacher's school/district, a candidate and/or program can secure a different volunteer who is allowed to video record. If no volunteer teacher can be found who has permission to work in an online setting, the candidate will need to wait to complete the cycle at a later time and move forward with securing a VTW.**
- 15Q. (NEW) How will I know if additional options of support for CalAPA candidates are provided?
- 15A. New developments will be posted on the Commission's [COVID-19 Information for Stakeholders webpage](#), which is updated regularly.**
- 16Q. (NEW) How will CalAPA submissions using online strategies be assessed?
- 16A. All submission received with evidence of online meetings or instruction will be scored by lead assessors who have received training and guidance in this area.**

For More Information

The Commission is committed to supporting institutions, programs, and candidates. Staff will continue to be responsive to programs and facilitate ways to enable all candidates to complete their CalAPA and be recommended for their preliminary

credential. Please continue to monitor the [Commission's COVID-19 website](#) for updates and direct specific questions to appropriate staff.

Additional questions? Email CalAPA@ctc.ca.gov